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Report of the third United Nations Code for Trade and Transport Locations Conference of April 2017

Summary

This report reflects the discussions and decisions of the third United Nations Code for Trade and Transport Locations (UN/LOCODE) Conference. The main aspects of UN/LOCODE and development were discussed and future work of the proposed UN/LOCODE Advisory Group were put forward.

This document is submitted to the twenty-fourth UN/CEFACT Plenary for information.

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I. Introduction and attendance

1. The third UN/LOCODE Conference took place on 30 March 2017 at the Palais des Nations in Geneva, following a request by the user community to organize such a conference on an annual basis. This is the 3rd UN/LOCODE Conference organized by the Secretariat of the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE) and the United Nations Centre for Trade Facilitation and Electronic Business (UN/CEFACT).

2. The objectives of the Conference are as follows:

- To provide a forum for stakeholders from the UN/LOCODE user community, including government administrations, private sector companies (and their industry associations) and international organizations to discuss future maintenance and development of UN/LOCODE;
- To share experience, lessons learned and the importance of harmonizing UN/LOCODE at the national level, especially for Single Window implementation (SW);
- To further discuss the extended use of UN/LOCODE in the maritime industry (e.g. monitoring of ship movements for maritime security) and in the Port Community System (PCS); and
- To present a study report on UN/LOCODE business requirements (as requested at the 2016 Conference), to invite comments and discussions on the way forward, and to report on the work done by the Secretariat since the last Conference.

3. The following countries were present: Brazil, China, Cyprus, Estonia, Finland, France, Italy, Japan, Morocco, The Netherlands, Thailand, Sweden and Ukraine. Representatives of the European Union (EU) were also present.

4. The following International Organizations took part in the Conference: International Air Transport Association (IATA), International Maritime Organization (IMO), International Association of Ports and Harbors (IAPH), International Port Community Systems Association (IPCSA), International Organization for Standardization (ISO), International Telecommunications Union (ITU). The following non-governmental organizations also participated: Bureau International de Containers et du Transport Intermodal (BIC). Private sector representatives that participated in the Conference included COSCO, Esri, IHS Markit, Marseille Gyptis International (MGI) and SMDG.

II. Activities of the Secretariat

A. Welcome address

5. The Deputy Executive Secretary gave an overview of the background and the use of UN/LOCODE. He expressed satisfaction with the work done since the first UN/LOCODE Conference in 2015 despite resource constraints in the Secretariat. He emphasized the need for increased engagement of the user community in the maintenance of UN/LOCODE, in light of these constraints.

6. The Chair of UN/CEFACT reiterated the importance of UN/LOCODE as a global standard to facilitate international trade and transport and its widespread use within UN/CEFACT, as it is referenced in several Trade Facilitation recommendations. He also outlined its use in many regulations worldwide including certificates of origin, international

transport conventions, sanitary and phytosanitary certificates, the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) standards, and nearly all customs regulations worldwide. He also underlined the direct cooperation with other standards bodies such as the IATA, IMO, the World Customs Organization (WCO) as well as many other international organizations.

B. Report of the Secretariat on the UN/LOCODE activities since the 2016 UN/LOCODE Conference

7. The UNECE secretariat reviewed the decisions made in the 2016 UN/LOCODE Conference (ECE/TRADE/C/CEFACT/2017/14 Part VI) and reported on the follow-up activities. One of the most important decisions was to establish a UN/LOCODE Advisory Group. The Terms of Reference (ToRs) for the UN/LOCODE Advisory Group were submitted to the 23rd UN/CEFACT Plenary for approval (http://www.unece.org/fileadmin/DAM/cefact/cf_plenary/2017_Plenary/ECE_TRADE_C_CEFACT_2017_14E__UNLOCODE_SecondConferenceReport.pdf).

8. Following one of the decisions made in the 2016 UN/LOCODE Conference, a study was conducted to analyse UN/LOCODE business requirements and workflows in order to support the re-engineering of the UN/LOCODE system. The results of this study were presented.

9. A technical brief was shared, as requested, to identify open source software which could be used to improve the data quality of UN/LOCODE.

10. As an ongoing effort, the UNECE secretariat has expanded the UN/LOCODE Focal Point Network established since the 2015 UN/LOCODE Conference. There are currently 32 nominated National Focal Points (NFPs) including new nominations by Cyprus, Greece, The Netherlands, Sweden and Turkey, as well as 6 Institutional National Points (IFPs) including newly appointed focal points from ITU, European Maritime Safety Agency (EMSA) and Eurostat, each of whom made a presentation during the Conference.

11. During the last UN/LOCODE Conference, the representative of Thailand raised the fact that while many airports are recognized by both International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) and IATA codes, there are some airports which are only recognized by one of the organizations. The representative sought clarification on which organization's recognition would suffice to submit a UN/LOCODE application for an airport. The representative of the Universal Postal Union (UPU) stated that UPU prefers ICAO. The UNECE secretariat invited the representative of IATA to clarify how to recognize an airport or how to recognize a location with a function of airport.

12. The representative of IATA explained that IATA airport codes are assigned basically to identify airports for cargo and passenger services. Like the UNECE secretariat, IATA has resolutions governed by the Passenger Services Conference (PSC) and Resolution No.763 is specifically for location identifiers. Following a discussion with the UNECE secretariat last year, IATA paid attention to issues regarding streamlining its coding system in line with UN/LOCODE. However, the representative of IATA iterated that it is difficult for IATA to harmonize with UN/LOCODE because the entities requesting IATA airport codes are mainly airlines and Computer Reservation Systems (CRSs) which serve commercial purposes and are vulnerable to unaffordable costs caused by any changes in codes.

13. The representative of IPCSA thanked IATA for clarification and expressed willingness to map the two coding systems because both IATA airport codes and UN/LOCODEs are used in industries which IPCSA services. The representative of IATA

replied that changing the coding system would mean a huge reinvestment, mainly in changing CRSs. It cannot be decided by IATA itself, and should be raised with the Secretariat of PSC for further discussion. The representative of IPCSA clarified that what IPCSA seeks is a possible mapping of the two coding systems that would facilitate its industries.

C. Pilot project (Phase II) to improve UN/LOCODE

14. Aimed at presenting ideas to the UN/LOCODE user community on how UN/LOCODE could benefit from new technologies, a pilot project was initiated. The pilot project (Phase I) for visualization of UN/LOCODEs on a map using a cloud-based application was presented at the 2016 UN/LOCODE Conference. It demonstrated the use of latitudes and longitudes for UN/LOCODE location mapping, the way locations are verified and the possibility of zooming into a UN/LOCODE location to gather related UN/LOCODE metadata.

D. Discussion

15. The representative of Japan raised a concern regarding the sustainable maintenance cost of the platform for the United Nations.

16. The Chair of UN/CEFACT questioned whether the platform would be hosted by UNECE or on Esri's platform. The representative of Esri replied that both solutions are possible. It could be on premises at the United Nations, or it could be a cloud solution.

17. The representative of IMO echoed the concern raised by Japan and added that sustainability is a key point which transcends costs. He stressed the importance that the platform be sustained by UNECE and all the stakeholders have a say in it in the future. IMO is very keen to follow the UNECE procedures, particularly the work done by the feasibility study team in studying business requirements and developing reports. Concerning the Terms of References (ToRs) given to the group, he stressed that the key priority raised by IMO is development of the business specifications. During a videoconference of the study team a few weeks ago, IMO discussed the possibility of opening up to other providers for similar solutions on the basis of business requirements.

18. Taking France as an example, the Chair of UN/CEFACT showed the participants the importance of having a NFP. He highlighted that all the Data Maintenance Requests (DMRs) submitted should go through a national control to ensure the quality of international trade. The UNECE secretariat pointed out that France is one of the top five countries with most UN/LOCODEs entries. Since France has almost used up three-character codes, the UNECE secretariat urged France to nominate a NFP to help clear up the code list. Otherwise more and more difficulties will arise in assigning UN/LOCODEs to new locations in the future. The representative of France raised a question regarding e-Commerce and retail commerce. He mentioned that on the Business-to-Business (B2B) and Business-to-Customer (B2C) platforms go through an international trade process, while codes other than UN/LOCODE are used in consignee addresses on Customer-to-Customer (C2C) platforms. The Chair of UN/CEFACT replied that the user case is not the same with UN/LOCODE.

III. Technical presentations and discussions

A. The harmonization of UN/LOCODE for Single Window implementation

(i) Presentation by Brazil

19. The UN/LOCODE NFP of Brazil presented his work and progress as an NFP, especially on the harmonization of UN/LOCODE for Single Window (SW). He indicated that there is a great need for potential UN/LOCODE assignments in Brazil, as Brazil is a large country with a large quantity of municipalities, international airports, Inland Clearance Depots (ICDs), etc.

20. He gave a short presentation on the use of UN/LOCODE in the Brazilian SW Initiative, which is completely re-engineering the importation, exportation, and transit processes and is comprised of seven projects, one of which is data harmonization based on the WCO data model.

21. He briefed the participants on the Brazilian code list status before the NFP was nominated in Brazil and summarized some of the improvements on data quality since the NFP was officially nominated in 2015. He stressed that a big challenge in the validation is cascade changes. Namely, one DMR may result in changes in eleven entries. Taking the port of Tubarão and city of Tubarão as examples, he underlined the importance of harmonization. He highlighted the need to harmonize the Brazil Customs, IATA, IMO codes with UN/LOCODEs, to review the code status with the values QQ, RL and RQ and non-three-character codes, and to eliminate duplicated codes for the same locations.

22. The UN/LOCODE NFP of Brazil replied to a question concerning the discrepancy between the IMO code and UN/LOCODE for the port of Tubarão in Brazil. He stated that the problem still exists. He emphasized the need to solve it and sought coordination among all concerned. He mentioned that similar cases probably arise in other locations of Brazil, or in other countries, and he further sought a solution to this issue.

23. He finally reiterated Brazil's willingness to popularize the UN/LOCODEs among Brazilian governmental agencies and international trade operators.

(ii) Presentation by Finland

24. The UN/LOCODE NFP of Finland provided an overview of PortNet, a National Single Window (NSW) implementation for maritime traffic in Finland. He indicated that PortNet follows UNECE Recommenation No. 33, EU legislation for reporting formalities, and EMSA's NSW Guidelines[1] and NSW prototype for implementation. In Finland there are few DMRs regarding port locations while most of the DMRs are related to road terminals.

25. He updated participants on the use of UN/LOCODEs in PortNet. He also indicated that Finland maintains UN/LOCODEs in line with the latest UN/LOCODE release and highlighted the importance of the use of UN/LOCODE in achieving data integrity.

26. He concluded by providing a roadmap for the NSW's future development which will entail harmonization at the European level and development at national level, followed

[1] https://ec.europa.eu/transport/sites/transport/files/national_single_windows_guidlines_0.pdf, which takes into consideration UN/CEFACT Recommendation No. 33, ISO/PAS 28005-1 EPC Part 1, and IMO Guidelines for Setting up a Single Window System in Maritime Transport.

closely by work at the Facilitation (FAI) Committee of the IMO and e-Navigation Committee (ENAV) of the International Association of Marine Aids to Navigation and Lighthouse Authorities (IALA).

(iii) Presentation by China

27. The UN/LOCODE NFP of China provided an update on the use and maintenance of UN/LOCODE in China.

28. She stated that due to imbalanced development, some cities do not have a code, while big cities have multiple codes to identify airports, ports and train stations, which indicates a definite need for harmonization. She presented the case of Shanghai as an example of the harmonization of UN/LOCODE in China. She explained that before the harmonization of UN/LOCODE in China, the code 'CNSHA' was assigned to Shanghai city, and shared by airports, ports and train stations in Shanghai. After harmonization, the two airports were assigned separate codes, namely 'CNSHA' to identify Shanghai Hongqiao airport and 'CNPVG' to designate Shanghai Pudong airport.

29. Regarding the maintenance of UN/LOCODE, she reported that phonetic transcription of the Chinese characters is used instead of English translation for location names in China. She presented the case of Xingang as an example, based on its phonetic transcription. As specified by the Ministry of Railways (MOR) of the People's Republic of China (PRC) in 2012, when East, South, West and North are included in the location names, phonetic transcriptions of the Chinese characters should be used instead.

30. On the issue of SW implementation in China, she explained that China is establishing the SW platform at national level where UN/LOCODE will be used.

(iv) Presentation by Morocco

31. The representative of Morocco outlined the challenges in international trade that economic operators are facing. He introduced the SW definition based on UNECE Recommendation No.33. He also drew participants' attention to the complexity of integration of the international supply chain. He further confirmed that an electronic SW is an important coordination tool for public and private service providers to help the economic operators better integrate their supply chain and facilitate trade.

32. He reported that Morocco has adopted UN/LOCODEs and the UNECE Recommendations No. 33, 34, and 35 for its PortNet SW implementation, and UN/LOCODEs are used to identify ports, airports and other locations in Morocco. He also indicated that in PortNet, UN/LOCODEs are used in several business processes, including management of air cargo processes, boat stops at ports, border control and at facilities related to international agreements. He raised a concern regarding the use of IATA airport codes by the air Cargo Community System (CCS) in Morocco.

33. The representative of IPCSA recalled the challenges caused by the intermodality of using UN/LOCODEs, inter alia, at airports. He shared that IPCSA is managing the systems subject to the transport modes, and the system should remain consistent with two repositories: IATA airport codes and UN/LOCODEs. He underscored the importance of solutions to this issue.

34. The representative of IMO stated that it was a good moment to recap what IMO stated during previous Conferences and that all the procedures at IMO are in line with UNECE. The following issues were clarified or mentioned:

i. IMO has never been an independent port coding system and IMO adopts UN/LOCODEs in its port system. In other words, IMO port codes never exist;

ii. For operational reasons, member states often requested IMO to update code lists of ports urgently and IMO could not afford to wait a maximum six months for the next release of UN/LOCODEs before applying the code in the system. It has been the practice of IMO to urge member states to submit a request to UNECE and IMO simultaneously . He noted that IMO is not in a position to verify whether this procedure has been properly executed by the member states. Therefore, it probably caused the discrepancy mentioned by participants;

iii. Concerning the case in Brazil, IMO shared with participants that IMO received the request from Brazil to change the code of Tubarão to 'BRESE' in 2010. IMO assumed that Brazil should have followed the procedure mentioned above and submitted the request to UNECE too and UNECE would have updated this change accordingly. He acknowledged that this case in Brazil is a good example to highlight the need to sort out the issue;

iv. He reported that China has changed many long-established codes, without knowing what implications changes in the port codes may have in maritime traffic;

v. IMO implements its Global Integrated Shipping Information System (GISIS), which is real time, with Application Programming Interface (API) for immediate download of codes updates. IMO prioritized the real-time update feature in the newly re-engineered UN/LOCODE system.

(v) Question & Answer Section

35. The Chair of UN/CEFACT voiced that the UN/LOCODE Advisory Group should take up relevant issues, such as six-month notice for a big change.

36. The UNECE secretariat explained that, as recorded in the 2016 Conference report, a six-month notice for big changes should be provided to the user community. The UNECE secretariat also mentioned that the Cyprus NFP is reviewing the existing code list of their country and the NFP should comply with this notification period in case of big changes in order that the UNECE secretariat could include them in the code list in the next UN/LOCODE release.

37. The UN/LOCODE NFP of Brazil appreciated the discussions and the clarification by IMO. He suggested that a NFP set up a network to coordinate at national level, to avoid similar problems across the country. He requested the feasibility of implementing a real-time update in the future UN/LOCODE system.

38. The UNECE secretariat replied that the real-time update is indeed attractive for the user community. UNECE will give full consideration to this issue during the re-engineering of the UN/LOCODE system in which the current free-of-charge service will be continued. The UNECE secretariat also pointed out that even if the real-time validation had been put in place, the Secretariat would still have a need to publish the release twice a year as a routine.

39. The UN/LOCODE NFP of Finland expressed willingness in seeing that Morocco has the same name PortNet in SW implementation. He acknowledged that the Morocco's SW covers more than Finland SW, which focuses mainly in maritime traffic.

40. The representative of IPSCA reiterated that there is an urgent need to harmonize the IATA airport codes and UN/LOCODEs in terms of interoperability of systems, without modifying the existing code lists.

41. Concerning location codes defined by IATA and those defined through UN/LOCODE, the UNECE secretariat stated that UNECE is making efforts to manage the harmonization. IATA has nominated a focal point based in Canada with the goal of avoiding future conflicts. For the existing discrepancies, the UNECE secretariat stated that

it is still pending for a further solution because of intensive resource consumption. The UNECE secretariat concluded that UNECE welcomes suggestions and comments and will work jointly with the IATA focal point to address the issue.

42. The representative of Japan reported that a similar case took place in Japan concerning the discrepancy between a code used in the IMO system and UN/LOCODE. He thanked IMO for the clarification regarding the Brazilian issue. He also questioned whether it is practical to harmonize all the codes used by different international organizations.

43. In the wrap-up of the morning session, the Chair of UN/CEFACT expressed gratitude to attendees for their active participation in the Conference.

B. Use of UN/LOCODE in the maritime industry

(i) Presentation by International Telecommunications Union (ITU)

44. The representative of ITU reported that ITU's work related to UN/LOCODE falls in the Radio Communication Sector (ITU-R). He mentioned that 25 per cent of Radio Regulations content is devoted to maritime radio, and a close relationship exists between the Radio Regulations and various IMO conventions.

45. He mentioned that ITU-R study groups maintain strong cooperation with ICAO, IMO and the World Meteorological Organization (WMO), among which the Working Party 5B (WP 5B) is responsible for studies related to the maritime mobile service.

46. He explained the use of UN/LOCODE in the monitoring of ship movements and stressed the importance of the UN/LOCODE system to the maritime industry.

47. He shared with participants that, as agreed through correspondence between ITU WP 5B and the UNECE secretariat in November 2016, ITU created a link to the UN/LOCODE website from the Maritime mobile Access and Retrieval System (MARS), an online access and retrieval system that allows users to consult the information currently registered in ITU's maritime database.

(ii) Presentation by Marseille Gyptis International (MGI)

48. The representative of MGI explained that the Port Community System (PCS) is a neutral and open electronic platform that enables intelligent and secure exchange of information between public and private stakeholders in order to improve their competitive positions in the seaports and airports communities.

49. He explained the progressive efficiency of three generations of Cargo Community Systems (CCS) in Marseille: one day for customs clearance with PROTIS in 1989, seven minutes with AirPort+ (AP+) in 2005 and a few seconds with Cargo intelligence 5(Ci5) in 2017.

50. He explained the use of UN/LOCODE in its CCS. Taking Marseille, Fort-de-France and Cayenne as examples, he underlined the importance of UN/LOCODE in managing complexity, supporting multimodality, ensuring data quality and stimulating innovation. He stated that UN/LOCODEs are core components of the port/airport business process which involves multiple stakeholder responsibilities, and that UN/LOCODEs also provide a reference framework to manage transport mode change at ports and airports.

51. The Vice Chair of UN/CEFACT thanked MGI for raising the interesting point of multimodality.

(iii) Presentation by Bureau International de Containers et du Transport Intermodal (BIC)

52. The representative of BIC stated that BIC's mission is to promote the safe, secure, sustainable, and efficient expansion of containerization and intermodal transportation. He introduced the BIC Code Registry, which was recognized by ISO in 1972 as the industry's global container prefix registry. He also introduced the party code for Container Equipment Data Exchange (CEDEX) set in ISO 9897-6, which is an extension of the UN/LOCODE. He described the structure of the nine-character party code, consisting of two characters to identify the country (ISO 3166-1), three characters to identify the location (UN/LOCODE), three characters to identify the individual party (BIC) and one character to identify the physical address of the party.

53. He stressed that it is important for BIC to strengthen their partnership with the UNECE secretariat to ensure better cooperation when requesting new codes in the future. In the past BIC just looked up and adopted UN/LOCODEs in a straightforward way. If there were no relevant codes, they would choose the closest IATA codes. He also pointed out that it is a good opportunity for the UNECE secretariat to enhance the importance of UN/LOCODE by registering UN/LOCODE as an ISO standard. Finally, he raised a question regarding the official name of the BIC party code because, as mentioned by the UNECE secretariat during the last Conference, it is regarded as a child coding system of UN/LOCODE.

(iv) Question & Answer Section

54. The representative of IMO shared a similar experience for maritime security. He stated that IMO similarly prefixes its codes with UN/LOCODEs to indicate the port facility at each port. This is called the IMO Port Facility Number.

55. The Vice Chair of UN/CEFACT expressed willingness to recognize UN/LOCODEs from the user community as a family and would like to see other child coding systems of UN/LOCODE.

C. Special Session: The use of UN/LOCODE by EU

(i) Presentation by European Maritime Safety Agency (EMSA)

56. The UN/LOCODE NFP of Finland, on behalf of EMSA, introduced the use of UN/LOCODE by EMSA. He stated that SafeSeaNet (SSN), operated by EMSA and EU member states, is the vessel traffic monitoring and information system covering the waters in and around Europe. It acts as a platform for maritime data exchange. Concerning the SSN user community, he reported that there are 2300 authority users including National Competent Authorities (NCAs) and Local Competent Authorities (LCAs), and the decisions are made by High Level Steering Group (HLSG) & SSN Group.

57. He presented how to use UN/LOCODE in SSN to recognize specific locations/ports in order to identify movements of ships and goods, and to avoid confusion and difficulties for data exchange. He also reported that UN/LOCODEs with function 1 and 7, SSN specific codes, and temporary codes are included in SSN. As to the responsibilities, the NCAs maintain UN/LOCODEs within their own National SSNs and coordinate with UN/LOCODE NFPs. EMSA develops and maintains a central database to harmonize the data to ensure data quality. He also elaborated the procedure for updating UN/LOCODE in SSN.

58. He summarized future development with the use of UN/LOCODE in SSN. He stated that a Central Location Database (CLD) with support for web services is under construction

and will be hosted and maintained by EMSA. The CLD will be used as a reference to SSN as well as NSW. There are 25 NSWs connected to SSNs, all of which can use the CLD.

59. The Vice Chair of UN/CEFACT considered it important that these databases work together to avoid reinventions or overlaps. She expected that EMSA would engage continuously in discussion with the UNECE secretariat with respect to data maintenance.

(ii) Presentation by the Statistical Office of the EU (Eurostat)

60. The representative of Eurostat reported that Eurostat is the statistical office of the European Union and operates in close relationship with EMSA. He explained that UN/LOCODEs are used in maritime transport and Inland Waterway (IWW) transport in the EU. He also drew participants' attention to the challenges Eurostat faces in the use of UN/LOCODEs.

61. He explained that maritime transport among 23 EU member states, 2 European Free Trade Association (EFTA) countries (Norway, Iceland) and 2 candidate countries (Turkey, Montenegro), focuses on transport of goods, passengers and data collection at a port-to-port level. He also reported the Eurostat adopts UN/LOCODEs, temporary numeric codes (if no UN/LOCODE available) and other specific Eurostat codes for identifying special statistical aggregates (offshore installations, grouped ports). He mentioned that Eurostat has made an ongoing effort to harmonize the codes of ports since 2007.

62. He noted that Inland Waterways (IWW) transport focuses on transport of goods among 9 member states with data collection on a voluntary basis and at port-to-port level. He mentioned that the code list is updated on an annual basis. He also raised a concern that there is no official list of IWW ports because many IWW ports are not assigned with UN/LOCODEs so far.

63. He confirmed that all reporting countries are encouraged to request updates of UN/LOCODES via the UNECE website and should communicate to Eurostat any changes. He mentioned that an annual crosscheck is conducted to verify possible inconsistences between the Eurostat code list of ports and the UN/LOCODEs list. He pointed out that Function 1 is associated with both seaports and IWW ports, and these would be better separated in the UN/LOCODE directory.

(iii) Question & Answer Section

64. The representative of Esri expressed surprise that EMSA had its own database which included both UN/LOCODE and EMSA's special codes, and was concerned that this may cause complexity in data maintenance. He questioned whether a one-source database supporting customized services would make more sense, and stated that Esri might take this issue into consideration during re-engineering of the UN/LOCODE system.

65. The UN/LOCODE NFP of Finland replied that he would forward the message to EMSA. He mentioned that, even though not an EMSA staff member, he was quite sure that UN/LOCODE was the data source of the database used by EMSA. He showed a roadmap of SSN towards the 4th version, intended to better meet the field requirements of new NSWs implementation around member states and to rectify and correct all the inconsistencies with the NSWs and SSNs. He believed that one of main issues was the centralized database and its accuracy and consistency. He reported that the justification for running a centralized database by EMSA was operational reasons and that EMSA must keep close contact with UNECE in maintaining the database and supporting web services. He shared that a new HAZMAT database has just been established in SSN, which is synchronized with the IMO database. Whenever there is a change in code in the IMO's database, a real-time update takes place in EMSA's database.

66. The UNECE secretariat added that EMSA downloads the UN/LOCODE code list using the format of Microsoft Access Database and then updates their own database. It is also stated that UN/LOCODE is updated through the bi-annual publication, thus causing a six-month delay as mentioned by IMO. The UNECE secretariat also confirmed that the situation could be improved in the new UN/LOCODE system and that UNECE aims to maintain one central UN/LOCODE database to support customized services for the user community.

67. The UN/LOCODE NFP of Finland agreed that the problem is caused by official updates of UN/LOCODE only twice per year and thus, in EMSA's system, temporary codes are introduced specially to make up for the gap caused by this several-month delay.

68. The UNECE secretariat replied that another stakeholder has a similar problem to EMSA and is using this kind of temporary code in updating their own database. The UNECE secretariat explained that UN/LOCODE updates are so resource insensitive that UN/LOCODE needs to be re-engineered as soon as possible.

69. The representative of IAPH raised issues related to confusions caused by messages exchanged between maritime and customs. He stated that, for example, a vessel from Isle of Man with the ISO-3166 code IM or Gibraltar with the ISO-3166 code GI is not recognized by customs. He raised another concern that for two cities (Ceuta and Melilla) in the North of Africa, customs out of Spain uses non-ISO-3166 codes, namely XC for Ceuta and XM for Melilla instead of ES to identify the country for those two cities.

70. The UN/LOCODE NFP of Finland echoed the same problem in their own NSW database. He illustrated that they would receive warning messages from EMSA caused by not recognizing the country code for locations such as Isle of Man and Gibraltar. He also reported issues regarding the Central Ship Database (CSD). He mentioned that EMSA is going to present CSD issues during the next SSN working group meeting to be held in May.

71. The representative of Estonia commented on the problem regarding Isle of Man. He pointed out that a flag state code used by EMSA is different from the ISO-3166 country code and thus a warning message would be sent from SSN. He reported that for different cities related to the United Kingdom, the flag state codes should be GB plus two decimals, meaning that the flag state code for Isle of Man is GB02 while the country code for Isle of Man is IM according to ISO-3166. He highlighted that it must be clarified in the SSN Meeting that the flag state code, not ISO-3166 country code, should be used in SSN.

72. The UN/LOCODE NFP of Finland replied that personally he believed that the CSD would tackle the problems by using a unique key for identifying ships.

IV. Round-table discussion

73. The Vice Chair of UN/CEFACT opened the floor for the round-table discussion. She expressed appreciation for all the presentations and all the issues raised, which must be seriously addressed. She reported that the UNECE secretariat is facing increasing budgetary cuts and underscored the importance to protect, contain and forward this work onto a better, modern, technical and logical framework. All users are encouraged to help or contribute to enable this modernization work to be done as soon as possible. Regarding the feasibility study, she stressed that it is important that all parties involved help to get the work done. She emphasized that it takes a very long time to re-engineer the UN/LOCODE system and the longer it takes, the more databases are affected. People need information accessible via web services. She finally invited the UNECE secretariat to address several related issues.

74. In response to the request for having more functions to distinguish the IWW ports from seaports, the UNECE secretariat suggested that this kind of question be addressed by the UN/LOCODE Advisory Group. Since the revision of Recommendation No.16 is in the pipeline, the relevant project should be conducted in line with the Open Development Process (ODP).

75. The Vice Chair of UN/CEFACT added that the ODP is a process which all the UN/CEFACT projects must follow. She mentioned that for the revision of Recommendation No.16, there is a minimum set of ODP stages (1, 5, 6) and the complete set of ODP stages is for new standards and recommendations.

76. The UNECE secretariat reported that UNECE is facing big challenges in extending UN/LOCODE, including extension of functions and extension of five-character UN/LOCODE. The UNECE secretariat also explained that because the United Nations Electronic Data Interchange for Administration, Commerce and Transport (UN/EDIFACT) is a hardcoded message which includes UN/LOCODE, any extension would definitely have a negative impact on it. She pointed out that it is a good moment to review this work to ensure that it is well organized to minimize any negative impact.

77. The representative of BIC expressed that BIC would like to participate in this work. He illustrated that BIC has close to 200 child codes to represent dry ports, container depots, container repair facilities and even container freight stations in Brazil. He urged the participants to visit the BIC website to look up the codes for each individual country.

78. The Vice Chair of UN/CEFACT pointed out that all the discussions led to the same conclusion. She emphasized that if the UN/LOCODE could be the highest level, the child systems could deal with some of the extensions, and that would make UN/LOCODE much easier to manage. UN/LOCODE should be the foundation that other organizations use to provide the subset codes. She also stated that there is a function code regarding IWW specified in Recommendation No. 19 and some investigation should be made to clarify this issue. She ended by stating that she is supporting coordination work with the Union Customs Code (UCC) implementation, and two-character country codes are in line with ISO-3166.

79. The UNECE secretariat explained that the next step is to set up a project team for the revision of Recommendation No.16 and welcomed participants to join in the UN/LOCODE Advisory Group through the Collaborative UN/CEFACT Environment (CUE) first. The UNECE secretariat also expressed appreciation to the feasibility study team. Thanks to their hard work and efforts, the study report was presented as expected. The UNECE secretariat also mentioned that the study report still needs to be finalized during the next videoconference and invited more stakeholders to contribute, especially by providing technical proposals for the system implementation. The UNECE secretariat indicated that there might be a need to set up another project team for the implementation of the new UN/LOCODE system, which is beyond the scope of the feasibility study. Participation is on a volunteer basis and the following representatives registered their interest and willingness to engage in the working group beyond the feasibility study: BIC, Brazil, Esri, IHS Markit, IMO, Japan, Sweden and Thailand. The UNECE secretariat added that future registration via email is also welcome.

80. The Vice Chair of UN/CEFACT raised a question regarding commercial use of IATA codes. She inquired whether both passenger and cargo services use IATA codes.

81. The UNECE secretariat replied that there is a strong link between UN/LOCODEs and IATA codes because the IATA three-character code for airports is the first choice for UN/LOCODEs when assigning UN/LOCODEs to airports. As to ICAO, for some airports there is still a need to transport goods besides for military or recreational activities. The

UNECE secretariat suggested that this issue be addressed by the UN/LOCODE Advisory Group and included in the scope of the revision of Recommendation No.16. The UNECE secretariat stated that it is not surprising to see several questions concerning the revision because the 3rd edition, published in 1998, was intended for a business scenario totally different from today. The UNECE secretariat highlighted that a child coding system is the way recommended by the Secretariat to extend the use of UN/LOCODE. The UNECE secretariat thanked IMO for providing a good example with its port facility coding system, where UN/LOCODE is used as a prefix followed by four-digit codes for terminals at one port. The next step for the Secretariat is to send repository templates to discover how UN/LOCODE is used by the user community, and the results will be published on CUE. The UNECE secretariat would like to register the information in the repository on CUE to figure out whether a child coding system or UN/LOCODE is used (and how it is used) for the sake of understanding the requests from the user community. For the future UN/LOCODE system, all the stakeholders would have a way (either though the data interface, API or web services) to synchronize data with the UN/LOCODE central database.

82. The Vice Chair of UN/CEFACT suggested that all these systems be included in a UN/LOCODE family. She reported that during the 69th SMDG Meeting hosted from 14-16 March 2017 in Genova, she found that some of the child systems might have harmonization issues as well. She underlined the importance of building the UN/LOCODE family, working together and having a centralized UN/LOCODE database.

83. The UNECE secretariat expressed appreciation for the concept of UN/LOCODE family and stated that CUE should be the home for this family. The UNECE secretariat demonstrated how to access CUE. The UNECE secretariat suggested that the first thing to do is to rename the UN/LOCODE Maintenance Group to the UN/LOCODE Advisory Group if the ToRs of the UN/LOCODE Advisory Group are to be approved by the UN/CEFACT Plenary the next week. The UNECE secretariat finally stated that the feasibility study team is focusing on UN/LOCODE business requirement specifications and user cases as the core for the future system. The UNECE secretariat welcomed participants to visit CUE and share with the Secretariat their comments on the project documents.

84. The Vice Chair of UN/CEFACT urged participants to make sure they have registered, because the presentation from today would be available on CUE.

85. The representative of BIC considered it great to have a family composed of several children so that possible duplications may be avoided among different child coding systems. As agreed by the representative of IPSCA, many systems have registered their special codes for their special needs without intention to change. The representative of BIC also reported that by having a family, an interface could be made to allow automatic updates to all associated child codes, triggered by any changes in UN/LOCODE. He explained that there would be many opportunities with one central database.

86. The UNECE secretariat discussed the issues regarding naming conventions for child coding systems as part of the UN/LOCODE family. The UNECE secretariat stressed that the naming convention does not exist yet and should be put in place in the future by the UN/LOCODE Advisory Group. She ended by stating that for those existing children that do not follow the naming convention, there is a need to be renamed.

V. Decisions and way forward

87. The UNECE secretariat summarized the main conclusions of the Conference as follows:

a) As soon as the ToRs of the UN/LOCODE Advisory Group are approved officially, the UN/LOCODE Advisory Group should be functional for discussing and deciding main issues related to the UN/LOCODE maintenance and development. All key stakeholders are welcome to register themselves to be UN/CEFACT experts and join the UN/LOCODE Advisory Group on a volunteer basis via CUE;

b) The network of NFPs should be enhanced through an ongoing effort by the UNECE secretariat with support from relevant governmental authorities;

c) Revision of UNECE Recommendation No.16 should be carried out by the UN/LOCODE Advisory Group as a UN/CEFACT project by following Open Development Process;

d) A project team should be set up for the re-engineering of the UN/LOCODE system. During the Conference the following representatives voluntarily registered their interest and willingness to engage in the project: BIC, Brazil, Esri, IHS Markit, IMO, Japan, Sweden and Thailand. Future registration via email to the UNECE secretariat is open to other participants to allow more stakeholders to contribute to the project;

e) A template should be sent out to gather information on how UN/LOCODE is being used by the user community prior to the establishment of the UN/LOCODE family repository;

f) Results received for the repository should be published on CUE and shared with the user community;

g) Comments on the project documents of the feasibility study team are welcome;

h) UNECE should act as a coordinator and make ongoing efforts to harmonize location coding systems developed by other international organizations;

i) It is noted that IMO has never issued an independent coding system for ports and IMO port code do not exist. IMO member states should communicate changes to the UNECE secretariat when requesting IMO to update a code urgently. IMO should urge its member states to follow the proper procedure to better address the issues and avoid any possible discrepancies in the future;

j) Concerning the flag state code and IMO ship identification number scheme, clarification should be provided to the UN/LOCODE Advisory Group by IMO;

k) Regarding ship identification used in SSN, clarification should be provided by EMSA to the UN/LOCODE Advisory Group;

l) Industries are urged to jointly address the discrepancies between IATA airport codes and UN/LOCODE as soon as possible. IATA should raise the issue to the Secretariat of PSC in response to IPCSA's request;

m) Other issues pending for discussion and decision of the UN/LOCODE Advisory Group:

   i. Naming convention for child systems as part of the UN/LOCODE family;

   ii. Investigation of function code for IWW ports;

   iii. Feasibility study for the registration of UN/LOCODE as an ISO standard.

88. The UNECE secretariat indicated that in the framework of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), cooperation between the UNECE secretariat and the user community is of paramount importance for the UN/LOCODE development. The UNECE

secretariat will continue to work closely with the user community to support the development, enhancement and maintenance of UN/LOCODE in a sustainable way.